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PORT O' POETS

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HOOSIER NUMBER

Emeline Fairbanks Mem. Library

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PORT O' POETS

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Manuscripts and all editorial correspondence should be sent to the editor. Every manuscript received will be read with the hope that it will prove available for use. Although no responsibility can be assumed for anything submitted, every effort will be made to return unavailable manuscripts if accompanied by return postage. At present Port O' Poets is unable to pay for manuscripts. Although there is no restrictions as to form or length of poems, our present need is short lyrics not exceeding fourteen lines.

PRIZES

Henry Harrison, Poetry Publisher, 79 Fourth Avenue, New York, will award the following for best poems in this number: "SELECTED POEMS" by Benjamin Musser; "MYSELF LIMITED" by Henry Harrison; "SHELTER OF SONG" by Elizabeth Voss.

The PORT O' POETS' prizes for best poems in the November-December were awarded as follows: First prize, one year's subscription to PORT O' POETS, to Strickland Gillilan for "Understanding". Second prize, 100 cards printed, to Rita Field Greene for "Trail Signs". Third prize, six months' subscription to PORT O' POETS, to Clyde R. Protsman for "Sacrifice".

Olive Scott Stainsby, Box 363, Anaheim, California, continues her offer of a copy of "VERSE FORMS" for her choice of poems in this number.

TINY MAGAZINE (Unk Ebenezer, 4446 Clifton Ave., Chicago) continues his offer of prizes for poems re-printed from PORT O' POETS.

PORT O' POETS will award three one-year subscriptions for the editor's choice of poems in this number.

A check () here indicates that your subscription expires with this number.

PORT O' POETS

INDIANA ROOM

PAMPHLET FILE

JANUARY—FEBRUARY 1938

A COUNTRY ROAD

In vagrant mood it wanders over
The drowsing hills, by fields of clover,
Uncertain where its course may tend,
Or when its journeying may end.

You saw the wood-vine that is growing
At the road's turn. Now it is glowing—
A crimson sentinel to stand
And herald autumn to the land.

A wind goes by, the light leaves follow
And hurry down from hill to hollow,
While, in the wide wind of the sky,
Fleet flocks of swallows southward fly.

Oh, feet are light and heart has laughter
For what the world may hold hereafter—
The road leads far from toil and care
To open lea, and sky, and air.

Renos H. Richards

THE WATCH UPON THE SHORE

The tireless waves beat and pound.
Incessantly the wind blows.
I have lain here upon the wide blanket of grass and ferns,
Under the rays of the insistent sun.

Slowly into the Amber West, the red ball drops.
Around the head-land, into the shadows,
Sails the last ship home.

Anna Vernon

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GRIEF AT PARTING

These tears are not for you.
I do not care at all that you should go;
I can say that, who once did love you so,
Nor dreamed your love untrue.

Your going gives no pain.
I even wish for you, in far off days
A new love that will lead you happier ways,
And bring you joy again.

I do not weep for you.
But may I not, remembering golden years,
Anoint my dead Love's casket with my tears?
And cover it with rue?

Mabel Newman

ILLICIT

Dawn came a-stealing
Grey as the mist;
In penitence kneeling
For her illicit tryst:
Skies lowered, weeping
For virginal Dawn,
Torn from its keeping
With chastity gone.
Grey Dawn grew pregnant
With promise that soon
She would be bearing
A Beam from the Moon;
A Sun-beam came borning—
To cover her plight
Dawn hushed her to sleep
In the cradle of Night.

Mr. E. H. Katterhenry

THE LARGER PLAN

A gorgeous dawn may bring a dismal day,
The brilliant colors fading with the morn;
Dark clouds beneath the rim unseen, unborn,
Sometimes the fairest promises betray.
And, too, the dawn-child of a rain drenched night
Abruptly may forget its groundless fears,
And laughingly through yet its undried tears
Assuage the sodden earth with golden light.

Our deepest sorrows but accentuate
The joys we knew before—or yet to be;
The winter may seem long, eternity,
But May we know will come to compensate.
Though sorrows seem to crush the very soul,
We never should forget the wondrous whole.

Ben Stevenson

ONE MOMENT

My sweet,
Let us clasp hands
And for just one moment
Each think in our own mind,
Repelling thoughts of all others,
“I am yours—you are mine.”

And then,
All through my life
I shall be able to look back
And think—
For One Moment
She was mine.

Daniel Francis Clancy

THE FLORIST SHOP

The florist shop on wintry days
Breathes hope of spring in its displays;
Bright roses bloom in colors rare,
And winnow out each petty care
From hearts who pass the cold byways.
Farewell to winter's dullish grays!
The florist window is ablaze
And every passer-by may share
The florist shop.
I stand outside the shop, and gaze
At varied blossoms which amaze
And lift my soul. Quite unaware
Of time or space, I linger there.
It fills my heart with roundelays—
The florist shop.

Amy Vance Weeks

CIRCUMSTANCES

The veil of fate
Seems but the thinnest web at first—
A fragile and transparent dome
That any wish could burst.

But how it grows!
An octopus with closing arms,
Restraining us within its grasp
By its hypnotic charms

Until, at last,
We swoon and sleep, choked by its breath.
And our hopes, loves, ambitions dear
Lie broken, strewn in death!

Smiley W. Irwin

NEMESIS

His Soul lives in a room devoid of light,
The curtains hanging low, the shutters tight,
Lest Memory should enter in the night,
Bringing regret for lost ideals.

Lest in the midnight he should wake to hear
Voices from out the past, now strangely near,
Accusing Voices crying faint, yet clear:
"We are the Ghosts of dead Ideals.

"Once in your youth we dwelt within your heart,
Sharing its love, its pleasures, and its art;
Then you grew scornful and bade us depart
Out in the night—your old Ideals.

"Out in the night where bitter winds swept by,
To wander and to starve—at last to lie
Beneath the snows that fell from winter sky,
Friends of your youth—the old Ideals.

"Strong in your might, all heedless of our plea,
Tired of your guests, and longing to be free;
No more shall we return, but you shall be
HAUNTED BY GHOSTS OF DEAD IDEALS."

Clyde R. Protsman

THESE QUIET YEARS

I have known enough of pain,
Give me the splintering break of bells.
Back to the earth to live again,
Away from the deep, silent wells.

Ken Hughes

SNOW-FALL

The rain is turning to snow;
The wind to the north is veering;
Over the lonely clearing
Faster the white flakes whirl and blow.

And the fluttering wild birds know
They face what they have been fearing;
The rain is turning to snow;
The wind to the north is veering.

For there on a branch, in a row,
Into my window peering,
They hungrily call for cheering,
For crumbs which the kind hands throw,
"The rain is turning to snow!"

Winona Montgomery Gilliland

MY PRAYER

Help me to give what's needed most,
A word, a prayer, a courage high;
I would not shrink from humble post,
Without applause, nor fret nor sigh;
In my small way, oh let me be
A kindly messenger for Thee!

Help me to follow all the way,
Thy pierced feet, where'er they lead;
I would not fear the closing day,
With only Thy cross my simple creed;
In my small way, oh let me be
A living sacrifice for Thee!

Ruth Williams Bright

WEST WIND'S WOOING

The cool west wind
Stole through the trees,
While rustling leaves
Sung melodies.

A shadow danced
On the ground below,
In perfect rhythm
To and fro.

Back and forth
Between the trees,
The shadow kept step
With the vagrant breeze.

They part at last
As was destined to be,
For the jolly west wind
Must always be free.

Marybelle McCurdy

QUERY

If from some secret corner of my mind
That does not love or hate but only thinks
I should some day be brave enough to find
From gazing on your naked face the links

That hold us fused as one, would I see there
The lovely truth of you I've held for years,
Or would you be a stranger that I dare
To call my own through bitter, frightened tears?

Harriett Scott Olinick

JUSTICE

Who really knows what actuates a word
A thought . . . an act . . . or something wrong we do?
Who has a right to let himself be heard
In condemnation, lest he be wrong too?

Who knows the kindling force of errant ways
Of other men, sufficiently to shun
Someone he knows, or publicly debase
Him for apparent wrongs he may have done?

Who praises men in voice one half so loud
As he defames? How sorely this world needs
The sort of men who really make men proud
With words of commendation for their deeds! . . .

The sort of men who never will impute
Unless they know that they are justified,
And who will use their efforts to refute
The sins applied to one unjustly tried!

Christine Grant Curless

TRIOLLET

Age affords no recompense
For a childhood that has flown.
Childhood's crystal innocence,
Boundless faith and confidence
Crowns its days with opulence
Adult years have never known.
Age affords no recompense
For a childhood that has flown.

Charles Franklin Harrison

IN INDIANA

O, the sunshine's brighter gold in Indiana,
And the flowers more perfume hold in Indiana;
The bird's song sounds more sweet;
The hours have wing-ed feet;
But life seems more complete
In Indiana.

Springtimes are greener,
Clean folks are cleaner,
(Mean folks are meaner)
In Indiana.

Fish are better biters,
Soldiers better fighters;
Poets better writers
In Indiana.

O, the moon's a bigger moon in Indiana;
And every month is JUNE in Indiana;
For the whole wide world's in tune, in Indiana.

Enemies are fewer,
True hearts beat truer,
Friendships endure, in Indiana.

And were I called away
To the realm of endless day,
I think I'd rather stay—
In INDIANA.

Alice Fernald Emerson

SELFISHNESS

Around you the rope
Is a circle growing small
Why do your hands
Never rest until it binds you?

Ken Hughes

A RAINY DAY

The little tea kettle;
It bubbles and boils
And merrily hums its refrain.
Content with its duty
It cheerily toils
While outside the patter of rain
Falls down on the roof
And the clouds move in grey
Precision, decision
A dark rainy day.
But I can't be lonely
I sit down to tea
And we hum together
My Kettle and Me.

Patricia Banner

LIVES AND FLOWERS

Fairest blossoms, bruised and beaten
By the passing storm,
Raise their petals, air to sweeten
In the trailing morn.

Precious lives, sore drenched in sorrow,
Gather strength anew
For a full and bright tomorrow
From a love they knew.

Precious lives and fairest flowers
Much in common lies;
Rain brings more of growth and beauty;
Sorrow purifies.

Marietta Moser

THE ATTIC

She came to me, a bride with laughing eyes
And face aglow with joy and love of life.
And he was tall and strong, her man—
I liked the way he called her "little wife".

He wove strong ropes between my rugged ribs
And there, when winter swept the country o'er,
She hung the wash, with wifely care to see
His long man-garments did not touch my floor.

And then I missed her. When she came again
Her face was thin, but in her eyes a light
Shown warm and soft. She hung upon my lines
Small lacey frocks, strange squares of snowy white.

Today there's silver in her dark brown hair,
She takes my steps so slowly! With a sigh
She leaned her head against my sturdy rib—
"We're growing old together, you and I".

Laverne Brown Price

PASS MY HEART

Life, help me to a generous part
Of love, I'm tired of sitting by
Unserved; if he can fill his heart
With second best then so can I.

I'm starved for love, yet well I know
No substitute will end my quest.
Pass back my heart, I'll wait, for, oh,
I still should starve on second best.

Virginia Vae Kidwell

ALONE

Across the hooded valley
The plaintive whippoorwill
Sends forth his wistful message—
Yet he is lonely still.

Upon the crag, an eagle
Seems part of sky and stone,
And there keeps moveless vigil,
To meet the dark, alone.

Against my window tapping,—
A twig against the pane,—
And O my heart, that echoes
The sombre drums of rain!

Hazel McGee Bowman

LOVE LYRIC

Young love is such a vibrant thing,
Like bursting flame and fire;
Youthful hands that hold and cling
In melting, mad desire.

Mature love is a steady gleam
Like candle's sheltered glow;
Oh, love at any age or time
Is sweetest joy to know!

Dorothy Downer

MESSAGE OF THE VIOLET

Of all the wild flowers known to mankind,
None so loved, so dainty, so small in size;
None quite so fondly cherished shall we find;
None whose beauty is more pleasing to eyes
Than the violet, which lives near the ground—
Hiding itself away, with drooping head,
Where the green grass and other plants abound—
Growing and blooming in its shady bed.

Sweet little violet, shy and demure—
Living and serving, from day unto day,
With life so simple, so humble and pure—
A lesson you bring, in your modest way,
A message of peace and tranquility
That I, too, may live in humility.

Mary Hagler LeMasters

VOW

I will not be a part of quiet dust
Beneath a silent stone—some windswept day,
I will shake off the moss, the clinging rust,
And like a seedling, burst through stubborn clay.

I will join hands with every wind who dares
To flail a tree, or fling a stinging rain.
I will not cringe at scarlet lightning flares,
Or quail when thunder splits the clouds in twain.

I will await the time when wild winds die,
And I will seek the place where dreams are laid;
Then sleep, a shadow on a starless sky,
Forever free from earth, and unafraid.

Ellen Betty Brink

LIFE'S TOYS

On rainy days the yearning comes,
 For the lost and broken things.
 The shattered hearts and firesides,
 The broken crumpled wings,
 Of hopes that sought expression;
 Of birds that meant to try
 Their shining wings at evening,
 Against a cloud-blown sky.

For life is full of broken things
 A faith, a heart, a home.
 A lovely pigeon's trailing wings,
 A little pictured gnome.
 Some broken bottles and a jar,
 Oh Life, how strangely things you mar!
 A broken dream, a broken bowl,
 And only God can make them whole.

Ruth LaShorne Bundy

 REGRET

A WARBLING bird came begging me
 To go and play beside his sea;
 But being blue somehow that day,
 I flatly balked . . . and he winged away.
 Within my heart I felt a pain,
 Until today . . . now I'm me again.
 My blues have gone—my heart is gay—
 O, Little Bird, come back today!

* * * * *

My mind reverts to that gray morn,
 When birdie found my soul forlorn.
 But birdie's flown with Time away—
 If he could come, I'd go and play!

Ken Barrie

THE SONG UNSUNG

There is a song remains unsung,
And poets oft have tried
To sing it, since the world was young,
And always been denied.
The melody would charm the ear,
The words such rapture bring,
The roving winds would pause to hear,
And birds forget to sing!

And who will sing that magic song?
Whose hand attune the strings,
To cause the fairies round to throng
In mazy, moonlit rings?
It often comes in twilight dreams,
But falters on the tongue;
The sweetest of all songs, it seems,
Must still remain unsung!

This lyric lies "beyond all art
Of any sweetest word";
It cheers the still-expectant heart,
But with a hope deferred.
It charms for just a moment's space,
With visions of delight;
Its fairy outlines who can trace,
Or stay its starry flight!

Alonzo Rice

PEACH BLOSSOMS

Cool are the apricot petals
Upon the face.
Moonlight mocks the black veil
Which night brings
To lay heavy upon the heart.
But the wings of happiness open,
You move above the world!

Ken Hughes

WINTER INVITATION

Now come, sit down and rest a while;
Let's close the door and talk.
The firelight wears a welcoming smile
And here is peace, a golden isle,
Where hearts may wander many a mile;
When spring calls, we can walk.
Now come, sit down and rest a while,
Let's close the door and talk.

Edith Lombard Squires

TO A PHYSICIAN

Now when another season's yield is in;
And slowly winter's anesthetic chill
Brings sleep to earth's exhausted native host;
Now when the whining screeching storms begin,
And snow descending softly makes them still;
All pain of flesh and soul too yield the ghost.
And we within whose breasts the bitter blight
Of circumstance once wrought too fearfully,
Write lines like this to proffer prayerfully
Our humble thanks for healing and for light.

Marjory Titus Greene

A BIT OF SPICE

We need a bit of spice in food
By way of a suggestion
To give it flavor, tang and zest
As first aid to digestion.
For lack of that leaves something gone
That is of vital need,
But just enough and not too much
Or it is spoiled indeed.

But spice alone does not suffice
And has but little grace.
It goes against the grain with us
And is quite out of place;
So give us just a bit of it
To appetite appease,
Then everybody's happy—so—
Pass the pickles, please!

Mary Larkin-Cook

MY COLLIE LINGERS

Fond of me, true to me,
Never defying,
Whether I'm kind or cross
Never replying.
But with adoring eyes,
Tenderly ever—
Begging me not to leave
Or friendship sever,
Wagging her curly tail
Kissing my fingers,
Close to the side of me
My Collie lingers.

Opal McGuire

TRANSITION

Power is only temporary
All our customs in time vary

Silence ends each gay applause
Rocks will crumble when it thaws

Weakness has turned into strength
Sorrow has outlived its length.

Loyalty has turned to treason
Fame has vanished without reason

There will always be tears after
Too much gaiety and laughter

Yet without this scale of change
Life would lose its proper range.

Franchen Hauser Williams

THE RAINBOW TRAIL

The Rainbow Trail is a long trail,
Narrow, worn and old,
And the way is rough, but the goal is great—
The Rainbow's Pot of Gold;
Winding into the Land of Dreams
And beside the shores of desolate streams,
The way is hard, and hearts are cold
To seekers after the Rainbow's Gold.

Loren Phillips

SOME DAY

Some day I'll find the time to go and seek
A beauty spot to all the world unknown;
A spot with rarest flowers overgrown;
A nameless waterfall in some lost creek;
Old documents that in strange tongues shall speak;
Or, in deep mystic caves, a buried stone
With carvings to be read by me, alone;
Or view unheard-of lands from some tall peak.

But days pass by, and I, afraid to go
Lest I should leave some priceless thing behind,
Remain where I am placed; but even so
My task is lightened by the peace of mind
That comes with plans that ever grow and glow;
For Some Day, I shall go and seek and find!

Hazel I. Dannecker

THE ODE

Behold the ode! magnificent,
Exalted with its sentiment,
 Composed with even flowing beats
 By Byron, Milton. Shelly, Keats,
And poets by the regiment.

Announce the ode as eloquent,
Each nobly wrought, and reverent;
 When culture smilingly entreats—
 Behold the ode.
An ode is always excellent,

A poet's living monument,
 The essence of his life-receipts;
 To share the literary sweets,
And dine with the intelligent—
 Behold the ode.

E. A. Richardson (Big Rich)

SWAN SONG

My heart which once soared to the sun
Arrow-struck, has doffed its wings,
And like a wounded swan, undone,
To voice its anguish, one song sings.
My heart which once leaped to the sky
And laced blue space with silver flight,
Has plummeted to earth to die
Beneath the purple weight of night.
It was no poisoned dart that slew,
No hate, no anger's swift defense,
But eyes of deep obsidian blue
Whose weapon was indifference.

Polly Lois Norton

ENTREATY

Day, be not too quick to bar
Evening's greying shutters. Let
Twilight linger near the rose,
Leave in view the mignonette.

Maybe there will be enough
Light that I can still discern
Paths which lead to things untried,
Lessons that my heart should learn.

Love and hope are each so vast,
Brief the span of life to know
Attributes of loveliness.
Day, be not too quick to go.

Rose Myra Phillips

HOOSIER HOMECOMING

Seems kindo' homey just us Hoosier folks
'Round Port O' Poet's hearthfire crackin' jokes,
Talkin' of trivial things and big ones, too,
"Givin' the devil", as we say, "his due."
Maybe we find fault with some favored son,
Or point with pride to some uprisin' one,
Banter and fend and learn to take and give,
Hoot at pretense and laugh and love and live.
Housewife and editor link arm in arm
With dude from town and clodhopper from farm—
No one too big, too small, too young, too old,
No one too timid and no one too bold.
So lift our glasses, clink them merrily . . .
To Heiney's Hoosier hospitality,
To Port O' Poets, may her life be long,
To Hoosier singers and to Hoosier song.

Ruth Shelton

THE QUILT

I like the quilt I pieced so long ago,
With scraps saved from the garments that I made—
I think of winter evenings when we stayed
At home when you were ill, and I would sew
After the tasks of day; then row by row
I joined the blocks, and now I see portrayed
A hallowed, dream-like picture, yet we paid
For it in pain—time gave the healing glow.
And yet to others it could never mean
More than a quilt of scraps, but as I view
It in a quiet, retrospective way,
It brings before me many a vanished scene—
The early struggles when our lives were new,
A story without words, of yesterday.

Margaret E. Bruner

FROM THE BOOK SHELF

Although PORT O' POETS does not undertake to review books, selections from books of poems received will be printed, without comment, as space is available.

VERSES

The artistry that makes the earth so fair a sight,
The moon with borrowed gold, and many a caravan
Of suns meandering along the lanes of night—
All murmur mystical assurances for man.

A just apportionment of toil's reward should bring
To man the gift of leisure and the tender dream,
The upward look that inward prompts the stars to sing
The wonder of this cosmic thought-pervaded scheme.

To subtle, syllogistic quibbles give no heed—
The thisness and the thatness of salvation's plan.
But write across your consciousness the sacred creed:
Man's love of God is measured by his love of man.

How wonderful is man, how mystic human lives,
Exalted dust that knows the thrill of consciousness!
Of all our thoughts and deeds perhaps but that survives
Which lifts mankind above its inborn selfishness.

Of metaphysic certitude make no pretense;
But, silent and in awe, gaze on the cosmic sight,
Ennobled by humility and reverence,
As science pushes back the curtains of the night.

Max Ehrmann

—From "DePauw University Centennial Ode".

PASSION'S JEWELS

There are swift, splendid hours we can't forget,
When Life is centered to a point so fine
And still so dazzling we cannot define
Its meaning nor its mystery—moments set
Like cameos in brilliant silhouette,
Which we can hidden wear and say, "They're mine!
And you and I alone wrought the design!"

These are the treasured jewels of passion's net.—

We sat and watched the moon's young sickle veiled
With a faint cloud of pink, my hand tight crushed
In his strong, virile clasp.

"Sit still, sweetheart!"

He murmured, "See! the rose-mist cloud has trailed
And twined around the moon. All Nature's hushed
That we may love in silence ere we part."

Esther Griffin White

—From "The Little Paper".

ORGAN

Restless and untamed
In its mighty power,
A sound lies dormant
In the unsounded depths.

At the master's touch
The magic voice soars
From deep golden throats
In changing moods:
Sweet and tender as a lover,
Daring and bold as a warrior,
Light as the tinted wings of a butterfly,
Rolling and swelling as unleashed waters.

It sounds a clear chime of the present
And the drum beat of eternity.

Helen M. Salitros

—From "Let Us Sing".

VALUES

One cheerless day, when on my roof
 The raindrops swirled and spattered,
 I sat me down to rid my desk
 Of odds and ends I'd scattered.

I threw away, with other things,
 A letter, old and tattered;
 And then, too late, I knew it was
 The only thing that mattered.

* * * * *

In checking o'er, when life is done,
 The things I've saved—and scattered—
 Ah, shall I find I've thrown away
 The only thing that mattered?

Elizabeth Newell

—From "Through the Years".

 THE SEEKER

The curves of the river,
 The turn of the road,
 The arch in the blue of the sky
 By God, their giver,
 Were granted to goad
 And lure man's foot and eye.

There are curves in being,
 Sharp turns in thought,
 An arch in the things men do—
 To know and be seeing
 I turned and sought
 What bigotry calls untrue.

Barton Rees Pogue

—From "The Lifter of Laughter".

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